

Why I am for Woodrow Wilson

James A. O'Gorman, United States senator from New York, in *The North American Review*: I am for Woodrow Wilson because he is a great American with a profound reverence for our laws and institutions.

I am for him because his political record as governor of New Jersey, and his whole career proves that he has the courage, capacity, and character to meet the responsibilities of the high station for which he has been named by the democratic party.

I am for him because he will bring to the discharge of his duties an intellectual equipment and a devotion to the public welfare worthy of the best traditions of the republic.

As probably no other American citizen today, he has been a student of causes and effects. In the optimism of his being he believes that there is no excellence that the United States can not attain. The nearest route and the safest one, the least disturbing one to such excellence, has been the problem to which he has for years been giving his labor and his thought.

He has studied conditions and the causes of conditions; with a mind all sincere he has researched for the remedies for ills that we all know exist and for the proper regimen for building up the system of the body politic, once the disease has been conquered.

His gropings for truth, for the mysterious formula which the country needed, had been for many years in the cloister of his student home.

When he emerged it was with a convincing earnestness and an old, long politically neglected remedy, told in a language that burned into the hearts of men. The remedy was not his, but another's. It was that proclaimed more than a hundred years before by the father of American democracy and lay in the immortal words: "Equal and exact justice to all men, special privileges to none."

The people had it all the while, but he, best and most forcibly, by his reasoning and the adaptation of its ultimate significance in all governmental affairs, gave to it a new life, modernized it, and drove it home. In his speeches, in his writings, in his interviews, he has shown how its application to every relation of governmental life would crush the wrongs that exist, smooth away inequalities, restore equality to opportunity, give to manhood its entitlement of justice, and revivify a nation's hope.

By remarkable acclaim he was nominated by the democrats of New Jersey as their candidate for governor. By a revolution in political or party leanings he was elected.

Then began the work of the practical man, the transformation of the student, the idealist, into the man of deeds.

We are all familiar with the political status of the state before he became its chief executive. The public voice unheeded, a nest-place for corporation vultures, the kennel in which so many things foul in the country were littered, corrupting influences everywhere assailing the rights of the people, he found the strength of Herculean endeavor necessary for the cleansing to which he had pledged himself. Calm, serene, utterly unswervable from the course he had mapped out to make accomplishment follow preachments, he went quietly and effectively ahead. It was not long before the old rulers saw to their dismay that the "schoolmaster" had to be taken at his word, that he meant to do what he declared he would do, and that the man of ideals, the theorist, had developed into a man of courage to perform things and such things as meant their annihilation.

He was obstructed through all the channels known to desperation; he was decried and misrepresented. He stood his ground; offensively and defensively he met them. He announced himself the leader by virtue of his official position in his party and the true champion of all the people.

He had to fight, and he did fight. Behind him lay the cap and gown of the university, and in his hand was the sword of authority. When they crowded down upon him, he went away from the office to the source of his power and addressed himself to the people who had chosen him. The battle for a state's regeneration found in him a valiant leader, and the people were behind him. The legislature which had been elected along with him he held as in a vise to their obligations to their constituents. His reliance upon the people was to him a tower of strength. "If I shall be chosen governor of

New Jersey," he had said during the campaign, "the people of the state will be the boss—the only boss. I will be your leader, I will be your counselor, your mouthpiece, your policeman, your searchlight. Tell me what you want done in this state, and if that thing isn't done there'll be a big fuss at Trenton and you will know all about it."

The people told him that they wanted to get rid of the old conditions which had for so long oppressed them and degraded their state. They said that they wanted a reform of the election laws to prevent corruption and to make possible more direct popular rule; the better regulation of corporations; a working-men's compensation law; an act to allow cities to adopt the commission form of government; the regulation of cold storage and other acts to promote health.

There were "big fusses at Trenton," as the governor had promised, and he was ever a central figure. When the legislative session of three months had ended the governor, "the leader of the people," their "policeman," their "searchlight," had signally triumphed. The system against which the people rebelled had been choked to death by the corrupt practices act, which makes it impossible for any corporation to contribute in any way toward the election of any candidate, and likewise makes the use of money on election day impossible.

Government was restored to the people by the enactment of direct primaries for all elective state, county, and municipal offices; by the enactment of direct primaries for United States senator and delegates to national conventions, with popular expression for choice for president; by the enactment of civil-service tests for election officers and personal registration of all voters; and by non-partisan ballots in both primaries and elections.

Surely it is one thing to be an idealist and quite another to be an idealist and a performer.

As "leader of the people" the better regulation of corporations was insured through a comprehensive public utilities law, fixing the responsibility on officers of corporations for all violations, and vesting power in a commission to make rates and physical valuation of public-service companies.

Accidents to working-men were provided for by a workmen's compensation law, providing for automatic payments for injuries or loss of life in all industries, and doing away with the old and unjust fellow-servant immunity of the common law.

Other legislation comprehending every expressed desire made by the people and every campaign pledge given to them was effected.

Agriculture, pure food, labor, elections, sociology, civil service, conservation, education, taxation, all were looked after in a way that promoted the happiness and welfare of the people of the state. In his appointments of judges and other public officials his standard was high. He insisted upon capacity, efficiency, and character. Race or creed did not qualify or disqualify. Merit alone was the test. He appointed to the supreme court of the state Samuel Kalisch. He appointed to the court of appeals Mark Sullivan. He appointed to the office of port warden of Jersey City Antony Capelli. Those three legislative months constituted a writhing period for the adherents of the old system and the corporations which had so long written laws for the statute-books of the state.

When the end came it was with a clean slate, all promises fulfilled, that the governor had faced a people whom his administration had cheered and whose state it had redeemed. He had brought down to date, as far as in him lay, the principles of the great Jefferson.

It was but natural that, as a result of his efforts in New Jersey, he had attracted the attention of the entire country. It is not strange that when democrats were looking about for a man worthy in achievement, character, and all the phases of eligibility, Governor Wilson became a commanding figure. He was invited to address legislatures of various states and gatherings of the people in all sections of the country. Indulging never in personalities, a stranger to the acrimonies of politics, he spoke ever with a mind bent upon principles and with an eloquence that never failed to captivate. One of his most notable deliverances was at the Jackson day dinner, given last January in the city of Washington and attended and participated in by the leading democrats of the country. His speech was a classic in construction

and deliverance and gave added cheer to an already enthused and confident party.

His declarations in all of his speeches were clear-cut. He was the enemy of privilege, the champion of equality before the law. As the country knows and favors progressiveness, he is a foremost progressive. Yet all of his progressiveness is in direct line with Jeffersonian declarations on the subject which are so plain and simple that he who runs may understand.

As a result those organizations which have grown rich from legislation which gave to them special privileges see in him an enemy. The coteries of capital which have fixed the prices that the consumer must pay for life's necessities are his enemies. Those who regard politics as an opportunity for spoils are his enemies. Those who have long dominated political parties and determined election results by the cruel logic of heavy corruption funds are his enemies. But that his enemies are far less numerous than those who believe in him and the party of which he is the leader is made sure by the well-founded predictions of his overwhelming election.

His nomination at Baltimore came clean. It was not the result of deals or sordid alliances. No corporation influence contributed anything to its consummation. There was no machine behind it. It was a foregone conclusion, despite the long-drawn-out contention of rival aspirants. It came to him as the splendid reward for noble public service. It came to him as the presidency of Princeton University had come, as the governorship of New Jersey had come, and as the presidency of the United States shall come. It came to him as the one man in the country best equipped for the leadership of a great party at a crucial time in the nation's history.

That the rank and file of his party are enthused over the nomination no man who observes has doubted. That it was the best possible nomination few now can question.

Ever since the nomination he has naturally been most conspicuously before the public eye. He has made a number of public addresses, which have added to the general estimate of his great value as a factor in the progress of the republic. His speech of acceptance of the nomination showed how impressed he was with the vastness of service that had been imposed upon him. His subsequent addresses have shown that he is equal to the task of leadership.

There is no evasiveness in what he says. Every utterance rings true as truth and establishes the fact that he not only knows what is needed, but how to secure what is needed.

On the tariff he declares that there must be an immediate revision downward so that the evils of the present system shall be eradicated.

On the trusts, on labor, on the high cost of living, on every subject that affects the well-being and happiness of the individual, he is positive and unmistakable.

He declares that "those who buy are not even represented by counsel. The high cost of living is arranged by private understanding."

Governor Wilson knows all the ins and outs by which legislation for the beneficiaries of privilege has been obtained from republican congresses. He knows how and whence the various tariff schedules have emanated; that they have been written by interests desirous of benefiting themselves at the expense of the masses of the people. He knows the power of "private understanding."

He will go into office with no sword of vengeance, not to punish, but, as he has put it, "to undertake the great duty of accommodation and adjustment." He will destroy no business, but will seek to prevent monopoly and its attendant wrongs.

Speaking of what, for a better name, he calls "confederacies" of capital, he declares that "laws must be devised which will prevent this if laws can be worked out by fair and free counsel that will accomplish that result without destroying or seriously embarrassing any sound or legitimate business undertaking or necessary and wholesome arrangement." Surely such radicalism is not of a character that honest business should fear a democratic victory.

Further, along the same line the democratic nominee declares: "I am not one of those who think that competition can be established by law against the drift of a world-wide economic tendency; neither am I one of those who believe that business done upon a great scale by a single organization—call it corporation or what you will—is necessarily dangerous to the liberties, even the economic liberties, of a great people like our own, full of intelligence and indomitable energy. I am not afraid of anything that is normal. I dare say we shall never return to the old order of individual competition and that the organization of business upon a great scale of